



Tennessee Secretary of State
Nashville, TN

May 21, 2004

Dear Fellow Tennesseans:

This report on the status of historical records in Tennessee, ***Volunteer Challenge 2004***, represents the culmination of a considerable amount of planning and preparation which goes back to the Archives Summit of 1998. Based on a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and supplemented by cost-sharing funds through the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the report provides an up-to-date account of historical records housed in state and local government archives, academic and religious archives, library special collections, and repositories across the state. The three directories in the report offer the most current and complete guide to historical records repositories in Tennessee.

The rich documentary heritage which we as Tennesseans share has to be counted among our most important resources, and we should all take pride in this heritage. In order to retain this treasure, we must plan now to take appropriate action to manage and preserve the records which document our times so that we can transmit this heritage to generations yet unborn. This report provides a yardstick of how far we have progressed as a state in terms of records preservation since the early 1990s; it also suggests how much remains to be done.

Volunteer Challenge 2004 sets forth specific recommendations for improving efforts to preserve our documentary heritage. I challenge each of you to study this very carefully and join with me and others, both in government and in the private sector, in the cause of saving and caring for these invaluable remnants of our past.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Riley C. Darnell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "D".

Riley C. Darnell